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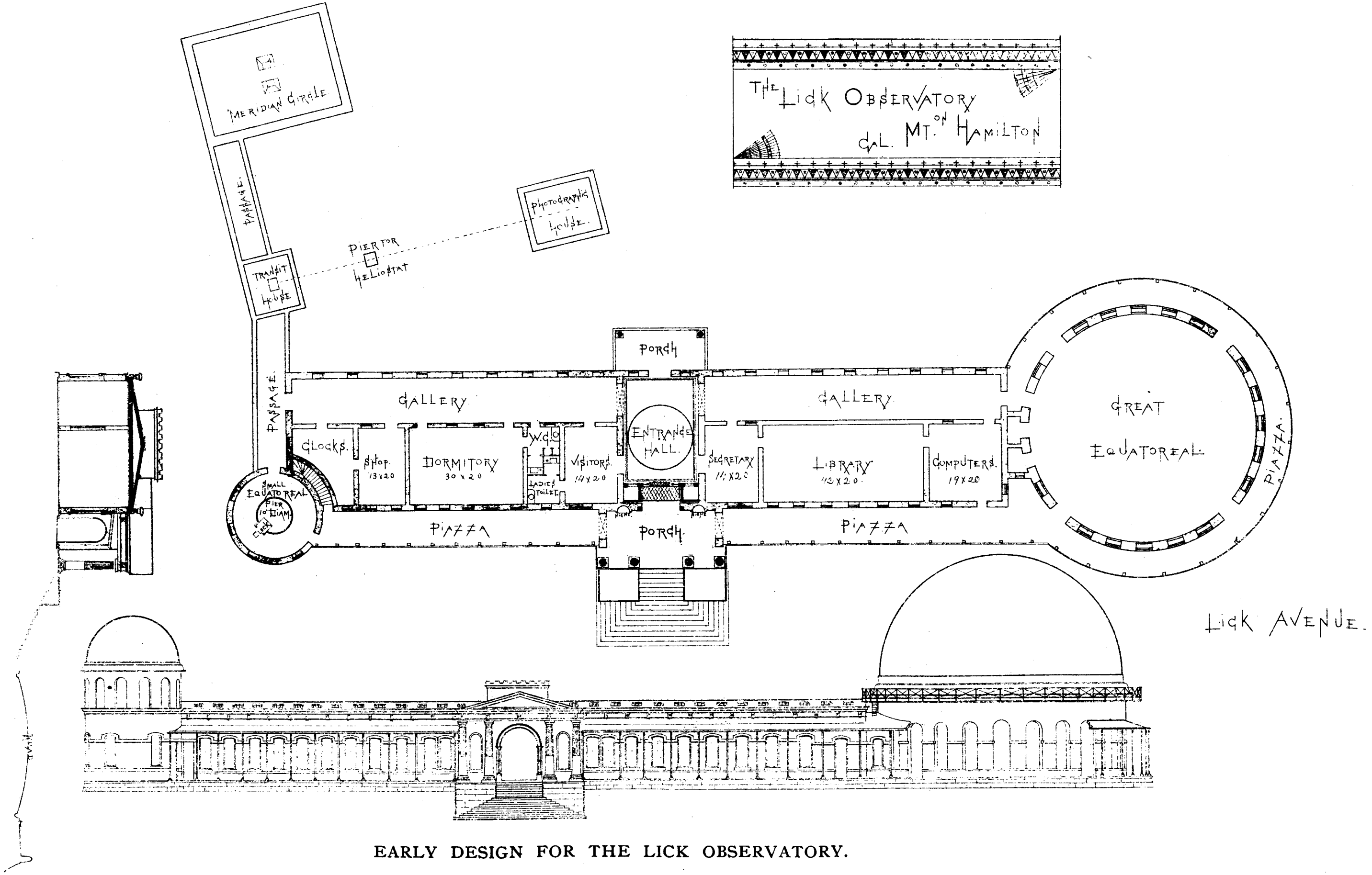

EARLY DESIGN FOR THE LICK OBSERVATORY.

NOTE ON THE EARLY HISTORY OF THE LICK OBSERVATORY.

By Edward S. Holden.

On July 16, 1874, Mr. Lick made his first deed of trust and appointed a Board of Trustees consisting of Messrs. Thomas H. Selby, D. O. Mills, H. M. Newhall, Geo. H. Howard, James Otis, John O. Earl and William Alvord. So much of this deed (subsequently annulled) as relates to the observatory is given in the *Publications* of the L. O., Vol. I, page 5.

In the summer of 1874 Mr. Mills visited Washington and consulted with Professor Newcomb and myself on the plans for the new institution. He also visited Dr. Henry Draper in New York for the same purpose. Before leaving Washington he requested me to prepare a brief memorandum to be presented to the trustees on his return to San Francisco. The memorandum was prepared (and is reprinted below with a few omissions) and it was accompanied by a ground plan of the proposed buildings. This sketch, by Professor Newcomb and myself, is now lost. Some of the pencil sketches from which it was made are, however, still in my possession. Essentially the same ideas were made the basis of a carefully drawn plan which was prepared for the (third) Board of Lick Trustees by Mr. S. E. Todd, architect, in Washington in 1879. This latter plan (which is practically the same as that of 1874) is reproduced in the accompanying plate. The observatory is now built substantially according to this plan simplified and made somewhat less costly, and at the same time less sightly.

The original plan of 1874 contemplated making a portion of the observatory building of two stories. Surveys made between 1875 and 1879 seemed to show that it would be advantageous to place all the principal rooms on the ground floor. The plan of 1879 was drawn with this modification of the original sketch of 1874. In the actual construction of the observatory it was found necessary to return to the first idea and to place some offices and a photographic laboratory on a second floor.

In the plate herewith the longest direction of the building is (magnetic) north and south with the Great Dome at the south end. The first office north of the dome is erroneously marked

"Computers." It was intended as the Director's office. It was intended to fit the quarters of the Senior Astronomers with studies so that much of their work would be done in their houses. The office of the Junior Astronomers is marked "Dormitory" in the architect's plan. The buildings were to be enlarged, when necessary, by constructing rooms on the east side opening into the long hall (marked "Gallery" in the plan). The continuous piazza of the first floor and the balcony at the base of the hemispherical dome, with the continuous platform on the roof leading to and opening into the small North Dome have been changed in the actual building, and the change has not been an improvement, I think.

In 1874 Mr. MILLS invited me to become the Director of the new observatory, and I accepted the offer. On his return to San Francisco he found that various difficulties had arisen between Mr. LICK and the Trustees. These were finally settled by the resignation of the first Board in 1875; and a second deed of trust was executed bearing date of April 21, 1875, and a second set of trustees was appointed, namely: Messrs. R. S. FLOYD, F. D. ATHERTON, JOHN H. LICK, JOHN NIGHTINGALE, B. D. MURPHY. Extracts from Mr. LICK'S second (and last) deed are given in the *Publications* L. O., Vol. I, page 9. The second set of trustees resigned in September, 1875, and the third (and last) Board was appointed at the same time, namely: Messrs. R. S. FLOYD, WM. SHERMAN, E. B. MASTICK, C. M. PLUM and GEO. SCHOENWALD.

In 1876 I met Captain FLOYD, the President of the Board, in London, and explained to him what was contained in the memorandum of 1874 which he had not then seen. The memorandum was at Mount Hamilton during the whole time of the building of the observatory and was in constant use. It is now lost. I have found the original *MS.*, dated October, 1874, from which the clean draft was made and I think it of sufficient interest to be reprinted here as a part of the early history of the observatory. It will show, I think, that one clearly conceived and consistent plan has been steadily followed from 1874 until the completion of the observatory in June, 1888.

It must be borne in mind, while reading it, that it was written nearly twenty years ago. The memorandum and plan herewith were submitted to Mr. LICK in his lifetime and I believe they were satisfactory to him.